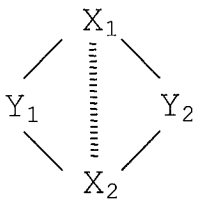
This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-10 (canceled).

Claim 11 (new): A composition for inhibiting the RNase H activity of a retroid virus reverse transcriptase comprising an inhibitory agent of Formula I:



Formula I

wherein,

X_1 and X_2 are antiparallel complementary oligonucleotide strands that associate to form a duplex;

X_1 is 2 to 24 nucleotides in length;

X_2 is 2 to 24 nucleotides in length;

Y_1 is 2 to 8 nucleotides in length;

Y_2 is 2 to 8 nucleotides in length;

at least one of Y_1 or Y_2 is 4 to 8 nucleotides in length;

Y_1 and Y_2 each independently contain a ribonucleic acid; 2′,5′-linked ribonucleic acid; or combination thereof wherein a Y_1 or Y_2 of at least 4 nucleotides comprises the sequence 5′-UUYG-3′/2′ (SEQ ID NO:1); and

wherein the inhibitory agent binds to the RNase H domain of retroid virus reverse transcriptase thereby inhibiting the RNase H activity thereof.

Claim 12 (new): A composition of claim 11, wherein X_1 and X_2 of Formula I are comprised of 3′,5′-linked ribonucleic acid; deoxyribonucleic acid; 2′,5′-linked ribonucleic acid; arabinonucleic acid; 2′-fluoro-arabinonucleic acid; locked nucleic acid; peptide nucleic acids; or a combination thereof.

Claim 13 (new): A composition of claim 11, wherein X_1 and X_2 of Formula I are comprised of 3′,5′-linked ribonucleic acid.

Claim 14 (new): A composition of claim 11, wherein X_1 and X_2 of Formula I are comprised of deoxyribonucleic acid.

Claim 15 (new): A composition of claim 11, wherein X_1 and X_2 of Formula I are comprised of a combination of 3′,5′-linked ribonucleic acid and deoxyribonucleic acid.

Claim 16 (new): A composition of claim 11, wherein X_1 and X_2 of Formula I are 3′,5′-linked ribonucleic acid and are 4 to 10 nucleotides in length.

Claim 17 (new): A composition of claim 11, wherein Y_1 and Y_2 are a 3′,5′-linked tetraribonucleotide of the sequence 5′-UUYG-3′ (SEQ ID NO:1).

Claim 18 (new): A composition of claim 11, wherein said composition is a cyclic structure.